

Torii Teller

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Spring blossoms in Iwakuni



official USMC photo

This weekend is the best time to view cherry blossoms at the Kintai Bridge, renowned as one of the most scenic spots in Japan for the occasion. People will gather at the bridge and surrounding areas to picnic and celebrate spring.

see story in next week's edition

2001 Friendship Day Poster contest winners

by Sgt. Michael Wiener
Media Chief

Recently, two individuals received recognition and cash for having fun and promoting international relations between the Japanese and Americans. The two people were awarded first and second place in the annual Friendship Day Poster contest.

The first place winner was Captain Ray Gambol, Station Property control officer. His entry, featuring Marine Corps aircraft and the Kintai Bridge.

"It's just a really good feeling to be chosen as the winner," Gambol said. "I saw last year's entry and wanted to do something a little different and a little more unique."

The second place winner was Makoto Sumida,

a local businessman. Sumida's poster showed two nations shaking hands, with doves flying in formation in the background. Seven entries vied for top honors.

The two winners will receive their awards from Col. Richard Dunn, station commanding officer, in a May 4 presentation here. Gambol will receive \$200 for first place and Sumida will receive \$150 for second.

"The money is probably going to go straight to the wife," Gambol said laughing. "I deal with the money here at work, but at home, she takes care of it."

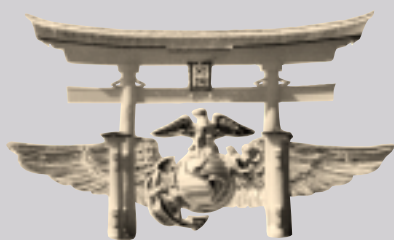
The Friendship Day 2001 theme is "Friendship through Understanding." Gambol's entry will be printed as this year's Friendship Day poster. Sumida's poster will be featured on the event flyer cover, which will be distributed on Friendship Day, May 5.



photo by Sgt. Michael Wiener

Captain Ray Gambol's winning entry will be this year's Friendship Day poster.

Torii Teller



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All queries concerning news and editorial content should be directed to the Public Affairs Office, Building 360, Room 7, Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan.

Is there an event you want covered for the *Torii Teller*? Do you have an opinion to be heard? Does your unit have anything newsworthy to report? If so, we want to hear from you, call 253-5344 or e-mail olmsteadj@iwakuni.usmc.mil.

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What's on your mind

Gunnery Sgt. John Olmstead
Letter to the Editor

This is truly astonishing! It has been nearly two weeks since the last controversial opinion was published, and no one has written the *Torii Teller* to tell us what's on their mind. I am starting to believe that this place is full of "shinny, happy people holding hands."

If it wasn't for issues like haircut coupons, water saving devices or slow Internet service commentaries, I'm sure many of you who actually read the *Torii Teller* would have never known about some of the controversial issues here.

To think there is a sounding board out there that gets the pot all stirred up and no one wants to use it. That's the point of this week's commentary — submitting your opinions for publication.

I'm confused though, usually once or twice a week someone will either stop or e-mail me to tell me just how much we messed up by publishing a certain article. To think that "thick skin" is actually a bonus in this job is an understatement.

So, let those arrows fly people. This is your chance to be heard. If you've got a problem or complaint, let's hear it — but let's remember to add a proposed solution. For that matter if you've got a lavish compliment, have at it. Believe it or not, this page can be used for positive stories.

Have you received great service from someone on station? Did someone go out of their way to help you or someone you know? Are you extremely happy with the products and services you receive on station?

Here's your chance to let everyone know. People want to hear what's on your mind. For

instance, a sergeant recently wrote an article called "*Things are swell*," and let me tell you there were at least three written commentaries concerning this subject, and so many e-mails on the topic that I've lost count.

Also, don't be afraid to sign your name. Nothing is worse than seeing the old "Unhappy in Iwakuni" signature at the end of a great commentary. If you believe in what you write, then stand behind it.

The bottom line comes down to seeing my boss, the Public Affairs Officer, squirm when something controversial is published in the paper. Not that I don't already paint myself into a corner more than once in awhile. But let's face it folks, we want to hear what's on your mind, so you don't have to hear what's on mine.

Take for example that "welfare mentality" where some people believe they should get something for nothing!



Corps News

Children's car seats no longer required for all AMC flights

by **Staff Sgt. Nathan L. Hanks Jr.**
MCB Camp Butler

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa, Japan — Service members and families traveling with small children are no longer required to use car seats aboard Air Mobility Command flights.

The mandatory use of car seats was based on recommendations from the White House Commission for Aviation Safety and Security in October 1998. However, the Federal Aviation Administration did not mandate the use of car seats on scheduled commercial carriers.

As a result, passengers transferring with small children from commercial flights to military flights arrived without car seats, causing the need to purchase the seats or obtain loaner seats from the ports when available, according to an announcement released March 8 by AMC officials at Scott Air Force Base, Ill.

Changing this policy should reduce hardships placed on families traveling with small children on AMC missions, according to AMC officials.

"Some customers do not like to carry the seat because it is something extra to carry. But, if a passenger with a small child is picking up a rental car, they will need to have a car seat for the vehicle," said Air Force Master Sgt. Sheila Bowles, superintendent, AMC Passenger Terminal, Kadena Air Base. "So, when a passenger checks in with a car seat, we will take the car seat and put it in the child's assigned seat."

Not having to use a car seat does not eliminate the requirement that all passengers, regardless of age, must be assigned their own seat, and officials are encouraging passengers to continue using car seats for their children.

"Passengers with children that are under 40 pounds and 40 inches should consider using a car seat because the seats on AMC flights are designed for adults," said Air Force Staff Sgt. Justin Sturn, day shift supervisor, AMC Passenger Terminal.

"We strongly recommend that parents use car seats as an extra precaution," Bowles added.

For more information contact the local AMC shift supervisor.

Marines team up for port ops

by Sgt. Michael Wiener
Media Relations Chief

Marines from Marine Wing Support Squadron 171, Marine Aircraft Group 12 and Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 12 teamed up March 30 at Iwakuni Port.

Working from about 8 a.m. into the evening hours, the crews loaded general military equipment onto the commercial freighter Cape Isebel.

Everything from ready-to-eat meals to Humvees was loaded, driven or carried into the belly of the ship. The gear will be used in support of Tandem Thrust, a multi-national exercise held in Australia.

"It's one of the smoothest loading evolutions I've experienced," said Warrant Officer Michael Rowland, MAG-12 embark officer. "We had a few snags here and there, but overall everything went very well."

Despite only working with each

other during ship load and off-loads, the units worked well together, noted Sgt. Jonathon Coon, MWSS-171 assistant logistics chief.

"This is one of the few opportunities we have to work with Marines from the MAG," he said. "They operate a little bit differently than we do, but we didn't have any problems."

The differences between the units was beneficial rather than detrimental.

"It was good for both sides of the house," Coon said. "It was good for junior Marines to see how things operate on the other side."

Additionally, some of the Marines who loaded the gear also boarded the ship to accompany the gear and be there to unload it when it reaches its destination.

"It took a lot of teamwork from Marines in different units," Coon said, "and their expertise allowed for a successful load up."

Career Day opens doors to Iwakuni youth

by Sgt. Michael Wiener
Media Relations Chief

Matthew C. Perry students spilled into the Main Gym March 28 to catch a glimpse of careers found in the "real world."

Knowing the confusion of choosing a profession, college and future, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron personnel set up more than 30 information booths covering a wide variety of careers.

After an overview of the booths and jobs present, students spread out to the different stations. Marines, Sailors and civilians offered "subject matter expertise" and answered any questions the students had.

"There was a lot of good information given today," said Corteza Hall, M.C. Perry 11th grader. "Career day helps a lot when you don't really know what it is you want to do after college."

From culinary artists to architects, there seemed to be a booth for everyone.

"(Career Day) has given me the opportunity to think more about what I want to do as far as a career goes," said Karen Caballa. "Being able to talk to people about their careers is very helpful and gives more insight into different fields."

"Students can sit in a classroom and look at a list of careers or even talk about them, but when they can actually match up a career with someone sitting there and talk to them about it, it makes a big difference," said Sandra DiQuinzio, M.C. Perry High School principal.

Career Day was such a success, that talk has already begun on the event.

"The kids were still talking about it days after it was over. I really hope we have another," DiQuinzio said. "I was very encouraged when asked what could be done to make it better next year."

SGLI increases to \$250,000

compiled by
Torii Teller Staff

The top rate of Service member's Group Life Insurance has automatically increased to \$250,000.

The current premium payment of 80 cents per \$10,000 of coverage will continue, resulting in an additional \$4 premium being withheld from each member's pay for SGLI.

As an example, for those members who currently have the maximum coverage amount of \$200,000, the premium payment per month is \$16.

With the increase in coverage, the premium will now be \$20 per month for the maximum coverage.

A remark will appear on the February 20001 Leave and Earnings Statement, bringing attention to this rate increase.

If a member desires the full increase cov-

erage of \$250,000, no action is necessary.

If any member desires a reduced amount of coverage, or no coverage, that member must prepare a new VA SGLI 8286, a form that indicates a reduced amount of coverage or no coverage.

This form must be prepared, signed, dated and submitted in April.

Any reduced-coverage or no-coverage requests received during this period will result in a refund of any over collection of the premium during the month of April.

The April time frame is critical. Requests for reduced SGLI coverage, or no SGLI coverage dated and received after April 30 will be processed to reduce the coverage or stop the coverage, but will not result in a refund of the maximum premium withheld for the month of April.

Questions regarding SGLI should be directed to your personnel office.

News Briefs

Limited Medical Appointment

Due to operational training for Branch Medical Clinic staff, there will be very limited appointments available on April 19 and 20. For more information call 253-5652 or 253-3419.

Road Tax

Station residents with privately owned vehicles are required to pay Japanese road tax during April. Road taxes can be paid Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the appropriate tax office. For more information call the Provost Marshal's Office at 253-3933.

Sleeves up

Beginning May 1, Marines and Sailors will no longer have the option to wear their sleeves down or wear the Service Bravo uniform.

School closure

Matthew C. Perry Schools will be closed today for a teacher workday. The schools will also be closed for spring break starting Monday and ending April 13.

School registration

Registration for new and returning students attending M.C. Perry Elementary school will be held from April 30 until May 4 from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Pick up packets for new students from the school office after April 16. In addition to the completed registration packet, the child's passport, a copy of the sponsor's orders and the area clearance are required. Call 253-3327.

Iwakuni junior headed to Teen Summit

by Cpl. Joe Lindsay
Torii Teller Staff

An M.C. Perry High School junior is headed to the Teen Summit 2001 held at Leesburg, Va. in May, after winning a base-wide essay contest on the advantages of being a teen living overseas.

Kristina Lewis will meet with other teen delegates from military bases throughout the world at the summit, where they will discuss issues concerning teens.

"Her speech was unique," said Sherie Sturgis, Teen Center manager. "She took a different approach to the project, and I think that's what set her apart in the judges' eyes."

"I tried to make the speech humorous, yet serious," said Lewis. "I started off by saying I've served in the military all my life, though I've never earned rank or been promoted. That's because my Dad is a career Marine."

Her father is Chief Warrant Officer 4 Frazier Lewis, Fuels Officer-in-Charge, Marine Wing Support Squadron 171.

Lewis says being the daughter of a career Marine has opened her up to a world of experience she never would have been exposed to.

"I've been all over the world," said

Lewis. "I've never lived in one place longer than three years until we came to Iwakuni. Having traveled so much has given me the confidence to go away to college and then out into the real world."

Lewis maintains a 3.5 grade point average at M.C. Perry and is also a member of the varsity soccer and basketball teams, Honor Society president, head of the Prom Committee and a member of Model United Nations.

"She basically does it all," said Sturgis. "She is a bright light here at Iwakuni and the entire air station should be very proud of her."

Not surprisingly given her extensive experiences overseas, Lewis plans on majoring in international relations in college, either at Spellman College in Georgia or the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. After college her plan is to attend law school.

"Anything Kristina sets her mind to, she will accomplish," said Lewis' father. "She's just that type of person. She is very determined and I am so proud of her."

"I am just thankful that I've had an opportunity to experience all of these things," said Lewis. "Being the daughter of a career Marine has shaped me into who I am today."

In the trenches for 16 years

I have served 16 years in the United States Marine Corps, but I have never been promoted, given an award or wore a uniform. I was the snotty nosed kid peeking through my dad's legs when we reached each new duty station. I was the brat who continuously kicked your chair on the airplane if you were fortunate enough to have sat in front of me for twenty hours. OK, so I haven't been through boot camp, but being the kid of a career Marine has exposed me to some pretty demanding basic training for adulthood. Being a military family member is definitely life training that will forever be a part of who I am.

I have tried to picture how my life would be if my dad was not in the Marine Corps, and through the years I've had classmates that had never left the little town they were born in. I thought about how I might have turned out to this point if I had lived in one place all my life. Seeing the same people everyday, and hearing stories from teachers on how they used to teach my parents. It is so different from the three-year routine of uprooting the family and setting out for a new destination to make our home for another brief period. I have to say that moving so much was probably a difficult obstacle that all military dependents had to overcome. Although as I became 11 and 12 years old, the prospect of moving slowly changed from a dreaded event to one that was expected and looked forward to with excitement. I realized mobility was a way of life. Traveling has taught me to be open, fearless, and downright overbearing at times. Military life has shown me how to make friends in hours and

see **ESSAY** next page

Teen events scheduled during spring break

by Ebony Ellis
Student Correspondent

Teens aboard the air station looking for something to do during spring break, which starts Monday and ends April 13, can turn to the Teen Center and take advantage of the variety of events they are offering.

The teen center is a place where teens can go to relax, hang out and just have fun. All seventh through twelfth graders between the ages of 12 and 18 are welcome. Currently there are 40 members with the number increasing on a weekly basis, according to Heather Rendon, Teen Center acting manager.

To help keep kids off the couch and occupied, the Teen Center is offering several spring-break events to provide students an alternative to lounging around the house.

According to Rendon, the Teen Center took feedback from its members and geared spring-break events from their suggestions. "Last year the teens seemed to have a good time, especially

on "Night at the Apollo," she said.

On Saturday, the Teen Center will be hosting a Birthday Social from 4 to 5 p.m. This gives teens the chance to celebrate all of the birthdays in April with their friends. Food and refreshments will be served.

"Even though my birthday is in December, I'll probably show up just to see who all is there and say happy birthday or something," said 16-year-old Derik Brendle.

A block party is also scheduled Saturday from 7 to 10 p.m., complete with refreshments and music.

"I think a lot of people will show up for this one," said 17-year-old Edward Cunningham. "I'll probably be there too."

On Tuesday the Teen Center will be hosting a "Night at the Apollo" from 7 to 9 p.m. For those teens believing they have a real talent and wish to share it with others, here is their chance.

"We already have teens signed up to sing, read poetry and dance," said Rendon. "And the winner will receive a \$25 gift certificate for the exchange."

The Teen Center will be taking a group trip to the South Side Bowling Alley on Wednesday from 1 to 3 p.m. "Teens wanting to enjoy a couple of hours competing with friends, here is the opportunity," Rendon said.

Of course they have something special planned to end this fun filled week. What better way than with a Spring Dance, April 13. A disc jockey will play everyone's favorites, whether old or new, and there will be refreshments. The Teen Center staff supervises all events.

"I think this will be something a lot of people will show up for," said 15-year-old Akira Chavis.

So for teens who have nothing to do over spring break, come to the Teen Center and see what is going on, or if for no other reason, just to hang out.

For additional information about any of the events, stop by the Teen Center, located in Crossroads Mall or call at 253-6454. The Teen Center is open Monday-Thursday 3 to 9 p.m., Friday 3 to 11 p.m., and Saturday noon to 11 p.m.

Aero club gets off the ground

by Cpl. Kurt Fredrickson
Torii Teller Staff

Although some individuals aboard the air station cannot get a drivers license because of their rank or length of their tour, there is nothing that says they cannot get a license to fly.

The Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni Aero Club is getting ready to take off May 5 and is looking for interested individuals to join.

"There has been quite a bit of interest from the community," said Capt. Terrence Brown, Aero Club president.

There are at least 20 privately licensed pilots aboard the station who have shown interest and an equal number who want to become licensed.

At first only those with a license will be able to fly. But with the arrival of instructors in June, the skies above Iwakuni will open to everyone.

The club uses two single-engine aircraft. A Cessna 150 and Cessna 175 can be rented for training sessions or recreational flights.

It will take future pilots a minimum of 40 hours to get a private pilot's license, and it won't be handed over without the proper skills.

"The first thing students will do is get a basic introduction to the aircraft and eight to 10 hours of ground school," said Gunnery Sgt. Mark Patton, Aero Club finance officer. "In ground school, students will learn everything including basic aerodynamics, weather and airport diagrams and markings."

"I've always wanted to fly. Being in the Marine Corps I've flown as a crew member, but I have never been behind the stick," Patton said. "Doing this will allow me to take control of the aircraft."

Individuals can go from ground school to their first solo flight in one month, according to Patton. After four months of classes they can have a private pilot's license.

Although getting a pilots license is not cheap, at a cost of \$2,800, it can open up another perspective on the world.

"Most people don't realize how beautiful the area is around here until you can see it from the air," Patton said. "You're going to be able to fly around at a few thousand feet and view the beaches and islands, and the beauty of them."

Brown offered one piece of advice to those who think they would like to fly but cannot make a definite decision.

"Come up for one hour and see how you like it," he said. "Maybe the bug will bite you."

This is one of three aero clubs in the Marine Corps, according to Patton. One is located in Kansas City and the other on Okinawa. The biggest benefit of getting a license through the Aero Club, aside from being close to home, is that it is a fraction of the cost of a civilian school.

There is no rule as to who can get a pilot's license.

It is another hobby offered aboard the air station for everyone to take advantage of, even if they don't have a driver's license to get to class.

The club is open to all SOFA status personnel more than 15 years old. Registration for the Aero Club will begin March 5 at Friendship Day when the planes will be on display at the Aero Club booth.

For more information on getting off the ground as a private recreational pilot and Aero Club member call 253-4022.



photo by Cpl. Kurt Fredrickson

The Aero club's Cessna 150 is one of two aircraft that will be available for rental by pilots and students in the Iwakuni Aero club.

ESSAY from Page 4

keep them for decades. I have not grown-up with a friend next door for the past 10 or 20 years, but I have met hundreds of new friends and learned a little from each of them.

In Jacksonville, N.C. and in Petersburg, Va., I met people who didn't have a lot of money or lot of anything else to be factual, but they were able to give me some lessons. They showed me that where you lived and the type of house you lived in didn't matter half as much as the quality of the way you lived as a person. It seems that each time I meet

someone new; I take something from him or her that I have needed later.

Also being a military young adult, I've learned discipline, without knowing that it was being taught. When I was smaller, trouble was something that I found frequently. Nothing too drastic, just the normal childhood lessons that you must learn on your own.

As I matured I realized that my actions and values reflected those of the people who I came in contact with and respected, such as the many teachers, classmates, and other good people I've come in contact with.

My parents have been the

biggest influence in my life and the way they have guided me has been straight. I have seen the confidence and pride that my parents have in themselves, and I find myself wanting to imitate them. My life is shaped by their everyday calls to duty and the way they respond. From them I've set high standards for myself not only in day-to-day life, but my future.

Having the opportunity to live all round the world has not only made me more patriotic but grateful. Grateful for the food I eat, grateful for the clothes on my back, grateful for the freedoms we so often take for granted. I am experiencing the rich heritage of

military life and I'm grateful for the experience.

My time as a young adult is quickly coming to an end, being no longer dependant on my parents. It will be my turn to PSC on my own. Soon I won't have mom and dad to wake me up for class or to make sure I'm on time for something I said I was going to do. I know that life on my own will not be easy, but I know I will be well prepared.

When they ask me where I'm from I'll have to say "nowhere." I grew up with the knowledge that home is where you make it and there is no dependence on a dwelling.

/s/ Kristina Lewis

Fun around at H

by Master Sgt. Constance Dillard
Public Affairs Chief

The temperature's rising, the sun's shining and the children have cabin fever. It's time to break through the winter humdrum and jump into spring. A place to jump, run, slide and climb all day is Hachigamine Park, and it's just 20 minutes from the air station high atop a hill.

The park is a popular place for both American and Japanese families. On any given weekend, hundreds flock to it for family outings and friendly games of baseball and soccer.

"The park is huge and has so much to offer families," said Kathlene Lukasik. "We keep going back because our

son, TJ, likes the as a family we l

Set into the s ing trail is a chil many challenges over and through vault over; and v

"The best ob you can slide do 6-year-old TJ L strong."

For the faint large swing and attraction here, l suspension slide

Nestled betw ground is a rolle the roller slide v the park ending the sports field.

"The slide is then you slow d you go fast again "From the slide petting zoo and c

Dinosaurs su guard on a hill o tyrannosaurus t of all ages to clim sensors at the h



Justine Boerst gets a taste of this dinosaur, or is it getting a taste of her? Either way she hams it up for the camera.

The suspension slide provides fun for young and old. Bobby Dillard shows Kyle Spangler and RJ Boerst how it's done as he rides the slide to the end.



During a game of chase, the children use the netting. The netting is only one of dozens of activities at the park.

Hachigamine

the obstacle course and dinosaurs, and have a great time.”

side of the wooded hill along a wind-blown children’s obstacle course. It offers a variety of challenges to include cargo nets to climb up, balance beams for agility and to conquer wooden towers to conquer.

“The obstacle is the one with the big huge pit, jump in it and climb up the ropes,” said Jeff Lukasik. “It’s a way to make me

over of heart, there’s the playground. A slide combination is the major attraction but the playground also offers a variety of challenges and tire course for the thrill seeker. Between the obstacle course and playground is a slide. Starting high on top of a hill, it winds its way through the center of the park a couple of hundred meters down at

fun because you go really fast, and down and have to pull yourself until the end,” said 9-year-old Kristina Kraus. “You can see a pit to play in, the dinosaurs.”

Suspended in animation seem to stand overlooking the park. Everything from a stegosaurus is waiting for children to climb on and through. With motion pictures of the beasts, the dinosaurs roar

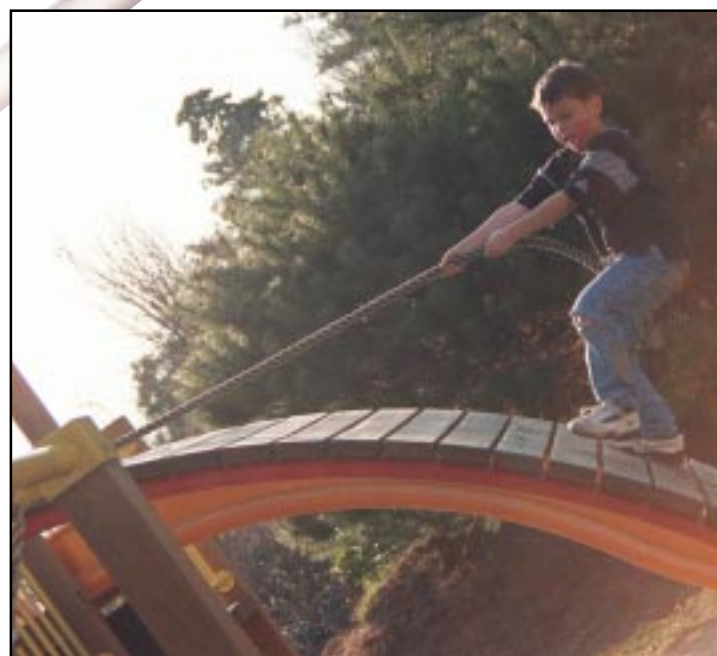
when triggered, often to the surprise of children.

“The dinosaurs scared us the first time we walked past the T-Rex,” said 11-year-olds Sandra Doyle and Justine Boerst.

For a birds-eye view of the park, a ride on the Ferris wheel is the answer. The Ferris wheel is operational during the spring, summer and fall months, weather permitting. Children and adults alike can board a mini locomotive to circle the park while taking a much-needed rest. There is a 200-yen fee to ride the Ferris wheel, train and slide.

Go out the main gate to four corners and turn right onto Route 188. Go through downtown Iwakuni to Route 2 and turn right. Drive 3.6 kilometers and turn left just before the overpass with the picture of a train and bee. Go through three stoplights and at the “T” intersection turn left. At the next stoplight take a left and then another left. Follow the winding road to the top and through the Hachigamine Park entrance.

Free parking lots dot the park and ice cream, beverages, french fries and other vending machines can be found at the center of the park. Fun however, is found everywhere.



TJ Lukasik, a 6 year old, climbs the playground wall instead of the walls at home during a spring day at the park.



Children show off their climbing abilities on the cargo net obstacle. The park is full of obstacles at the park to test agility, speed and confidence.



photo by Master Sgt. Constance Dillard

Jeff Lukasik cruises down Hachigamine’s roller slide in hot pursuit of his son, TJ. The park is one of the family’s favorite places to visit.

The official seal of ...

compiled by
Torii Teller Staff

A "han," or personal seal, has the same legal force in Japan as a signature does in Western countries.

The han as an official seal originated in China more than a thousand years ago during the Han Dynasty, though the art of engraving family names on stone has been traced since before the Mesopotamia Era.

The Japanese adopted the han during the 9th century, in the Heian Period, when court officials, nobles and the warrior classes used it on official documents. It has only been during the last century, since the Meiji Era (1868-1911), that use of the han has become popular nationwide. The Japanese people began registering their legal seals with local government offices during this period.

The impression of a han is put on all legal documents such as receipts for rent, paid utility bills, bank transfers and contracts. These impressions are readily noticeable because of the bright red or orange ink used with the han. The special ink is called "shuniku" and is made from a mixture of several ingredients such as mercury, sulfa, castor oil and a grass called "mogusa."

Though hans today are made by machine, the art of hand-carving them still thrives. While it



photo by Gunnery Sgt. John Olmstead

The impression of a "han," or personal seal, is put on all legal documents such as receipts for rent, paid utility bills, bank transfers and contracts in Japan. These impressions are readily noticeable because of the bright red or orange ink used with the han.

may take 30 minutes to make a han by machine, the handmade variety usually requires the craftsman to use as many as 16 different types of tools and several days work on it.

The materials used to make these unique seals vary from cedar wood, for the mass produced type, to materials like stone, ivory, silver, gold, or crystal.

An interesting difference

between Japanese hans and those made elsewhere – Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and China – is that personal seals in Japan are usually round or oval instead of square. Yet, companies and government offices in Japan usually use square seals.

Americans interested in getting one of these unique mementos will find hans made of wood are quite reasonable, about 1,500 to 5,000

yen. Ready made hans go for as little as 400 – 500 yen. However, hans made from ivory can cost 30,000 – 50,000 yen.

The hard part of getting one will be having a Japanese friend translate your name into Japanese characters such as kanji or kana, then arrange the name to fit a han. For those with long odd-sounding names, this could prove to be a most interesting project.

Out the gate

Cherry Blossom Festivals

☑ Kamei Park in Otake City

A cherry blossom festival will be held on Sunday from 11 a.m. to approximately 2 p.m. at the Kamei Park in Otake City. Japanese traditional drums, songs and dances will be performed. For more information call Chiaki at 253-6165.

☑ Kirito River in Kudamatsu City

Kirito River Oh! Oh! Fiesta 2001, a cherry blossom festival, is scheduled for Sunday at Kudamatsu City Hall Green Plaza and Kirito riverbed. Call Chiaki at 253-6165.

Yabusame

Yabusame, the art of shooting arrows while riding on horseback, will be held at Washihara Park in Tsuwano Town in Shimane Prefecture, on Sunday with demonstrations at 11 a.m. and 2

p.m. There is no fee involved. For more information call Chiaki at 253-6165.

Tokasai

Tokasai, peach blossom festival, will be held on April 15 from 5 to 9 p.m. at the Itsukushima Shrine. Bugaku, court dances and music, will be demonstrated during the event. For more information call Chiaki at 253-6165.

Hiwatari Shinji

Hiwatari Shinji, a shinto religious service where a priest walks on fire with bare feet, will be held on April 15 from 11 a.m. at Daisyojin on Miyajima. For more information call Chiaki at 253-6165.

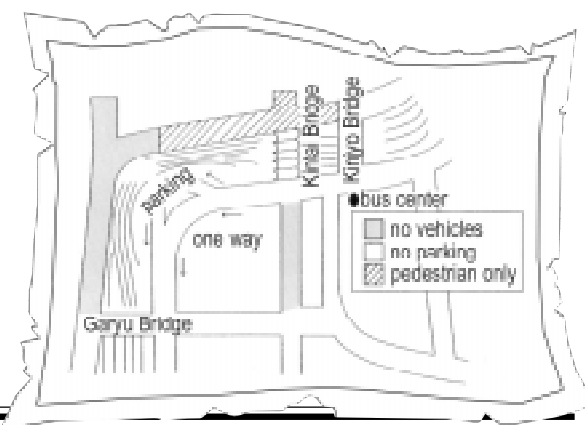
Kintai Bridge Festival

The Kintai Bridge Festival Committee is looking for Americans to participate in a time-honored Daimyo costume parade. The event is part of the 24th annual Kintai Bridge Festival sched-

uled for April 29. Call 253-4641.

Road Restriction

Due to the cherry blossom season, roads around Kintai Bridge area will be restricted on Saturday, Sunday, and again on April, 14 and 15, from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. Iwakuni City officials recommend any visitors to the Kintai area to take public transportation due to the heavy traffic. For more information call Chiaki at 253-6165.



Classified Ads

Vehicles for sale

—1988 Nissan, 4-door sedan, good tires, new battery, AM/FM cassette, A/C, auto, JCI till August 2001, \$950/obo. Call Col. Dunn at 253-4211 dwh or 253-3688 awb.

—1988 Mitsubishi Lancer, sedan, 4-door, A/C, heater, manual transmission, JCI till February 2002, asking \$600/obo. Call Eve at 253-2600.

—1989 Honda (Acura) Legend, charcoal grey, leather interior, power everything, sunroof, 18 disk CD changer, JCI till August 2002, \$2,500. Call Maj. Ebert at 253-4689 dwh or 253-2562 awb.

—1990 Nissan, pickup truck, 4WD, six disk CD/tape player, A/C, other extras, Call Chuck Hart 253-4693 dwh or 085-0338 awb.

—1992 Toyota, sedan, silver, 2-door, A/C, PW, Pioneer sound system, CD player, and rims included, must sell, PCSing soon, JCI till December 2001, \$1,700/obo. Call Lolita Downing at 253-2206.

—1993 Honda Prelude, 2-door, remote control engine starter, neon light underneath car, Kenwood speakers, front and back, auto, new tires, must sell, JCI till February 2002, \$3,000/obo. Call 253-5204 dwh or 253-5331 awb.

—1995 Honda Shuttle, wagon, CD-player, full-size spare tire, JCI till February 2003, \$3,900. Call Peter at 253-3399 dwh or 21-3766 awb.

Motorcycle for sale

—1989 Yamaha Zeal, 250cc, 74,000 kilometers, PCSing soon, \$1,000. Call Albert Perez at 253-6612 dwh or 253-6570 awb.

—1997 Kawasaki Vulcan Classic, 1,500cc, custom mustang seat, custom pipes, windshield, saddlebags, two full-face helmets, JCI till November 2001, \$6,500. Call Phil Avery at 253-6827 dwh or 253-2667 awb.

Other items for sale

—Three-piece over stuffed sectional two recliners w/storage bin in middle- and full-size sleeper sofa, earthtones, tan, brown and green, \$800/obo. Call Lori at 253-2370.

—Black standing floor lamp "studio style," \$10. Call Eve at 253-2600.

—Auto transformers 100V to 120V, \$20 each/obo; queen-size bed, mattress/box spring and frame, new, \$150/obo; Tiger rice cooker, new, \$60/obo; dining table w/three chairs, \$15/obo; convertible sofa, \$25/obo. Call Peter at 253-3399 dwh or 21-3766 awb.

MCCS job openings

(The following jobs are open at MCCS Personnel:)

—Sales Associate/Cashier, Sound Shop, NF-01, regular full time.

—Food Service Worker Leader, Burger King, NF-02, regular full time.

—Retail Area Supervisor, Sound Shop, NF-03, regular full time.

—Sales Associate/Cashier, Main Exchange, NF-01, regular full time and flexible.

—Sales Associate/Cashier, S/S 7 Day Store, NF-01, regular part time and flexible.

—Store Worker, Main Exchange, NA-02, regular full time and flexible.

—Sales Associate/Cashier, Auto Mini Mart, NF-01,

regular full time, part time and flexible.

—Car Rental/Service Station Attendant, Service Station, NF-01, regular full time.

—Program Assistant, Child Development Center, CC-1, regular full time and flexible.

—Recreation Assistant, NF-02, regular full time and flexible.

—Recreation Attendant, NF-01, regular part time and flexible.

(Pick up a job application in the MCCS Personnel Office, Crossroads Mall second floor, Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. or call 253-3030.)

—A home visitor position is available in Iwakuni. The requirements are as follows: Knowledge of military system/community resources, licensed LCSW or RN (RN must possess an AA or BS degree in community health, public health or maternal/child nursing), two or more years Postgraduate experience in community health, public health/maternal/child nursing, home visiting or family/child counseling. A driver's license and insurance are required. Only applicants meeting stated contract qualifications will be considered. Call Lilia M. Blair at 253-6553 or stop by the Community Services Building 411, Room 127.

—Iwakuni's Retired Activities Office has immediate openings for volunteers to maintain daily office operations, coordinate staff recruitment and training, prepare community newsletters, and coordinate command-sponsored retiree events. Knowledge of retiree and survivor benefits is helpful but not required. Hours are flexible with a desired commitment of 8-hours-a-week. Interested persons should call Tony Elliott at 253-6250 or stop by the Community Services Building, Room 201.

HRO job openings

—Child Development Education Specialist, GS-1701-9/11, open until filled.

—Education Technician, GS-1702-04/05, open until filled.

—Interdisciplinary Engineer and Architect, GS-08XX-07/09/12, open until filled.

—Interdisciplinary Engineer and Architect, GS-08XX-07/09/12, open until filled.

—Child Development Center Director, GS-1701-09, open until filled.

—Family Child Care Director, GS-1701-09, open until filled.

—Family Child Care Director, GS-1701-05/07/09, open until filled.

—Child Development Education Specialist, GS-1701-07, open until filled.

—Interdisciplinary (Psychologist/Social Worker) GS-018X-11, open until filled.

—Office Automation Clerk, GS-326-04, open until filled.

—Air Traffic Control Specialist (Terminal), open until filled.

—Sales Store Checker, open until filled.

(For additional information and appropriate forms call CHRO, Building 360, Room 32 at 253-6828.)

To submit your ads or announcement ...

Torii Teller accepts ads/announcement for nonprofit organizations and groups only. Briefs run on space-available and time-priority basis. Deadline for briefs is noon Thursday. Torii Teller reserves the right to edit to fit space. To submit, stop by Building 360, Room 7 to fill out a form.

Weekend's Weather

Today Saturday Sunday Monday



Tide Table

	Low tide		High tide	
	Time	Size	Time	Size
April 6	2:03 a.m.	0.70	8:30 a.m.	10.14
	2:33 p.m.	1.80	10:36 p.m.	9.82
April 7	2:45 a.m.	0.19	9:06 a.m.	10.48
	3:09 p.m.	0.85	9:24 p.m.	10.53
April 8	3:27 a.m.	0.05	9:42 a.m.	10.60
	3:51 p.m.	0.15	10:06 p.m.	10.94
April 9	4:09 a.m.	0.26	10:18 a.m.	10.49
	4:27 p.m.	-0.24	10:48 p.m.	11.05
April 10	4:51 a.m.	0.80	10:54 a.m.	10.20
	5:03 p.m.	-0.29	11:24 p.m.	10.87
April 11	5:27 a.m.	1.56	11:24 a.m.	9.76
	5:33 p.m.	-0.03	---	---
April 12	6:03 a.m.	2.48	12:06 a.m.	10.46
	6:09 p.m.	0.53	11:54 p.m.	9.20



Movie Schedule

Friday

10 a.m./7 p.m. Flintstones In Viva Rock Vegas (PG)

1 p.m./9 p.m. Batman Returns (PG-13)

11 p.m. Instinct (R)

Saturday

10 a.m./7 p.m. Caddyshack II (PG)

1 p.m./9 p.m. Mr. Destiny (PG-13)

11 p.m. Halloween H2O (R)

Sunday

10 a.m./7 p.m. Bass Pro Hunting And Fishing Series (PG)

1 p.m./9 p.m. The Wedding Singer (PG-13)

11 p.m. Gun Shy (R)

Monday

10 a.m./7 p.m. Adventures Of Rocky And Bullwinkle (PG)

1 p.m./9 p.m. X-Files (PG-13)

11 p.m. Legend Of 1900 (R)

Tuesday

10 a.m./7 p.m. ANTZ (PG)

1 p.m./9 p.m. The Mask (PG-13)

11 p.m. The Hurricane (R)

Wednesday

10 a.m./7 p.m. A Bugs Life (PG)

1 p.m./9 p.m. X-Men (PG-13)

11 p.m. Exorcist 2000 (R)

Thursday

10 a.m./7 p.m. Ski Patrol (PG)

1 p.m./9 p.m. U-571 (PG-13)

11 p.m. The Insider (R)

Sakura Theater

Friday

7 p.m. Head Over Heels

10 p.m. Saving Silverman

Saturday

4 p.m. Head Over Heels

7 p.m. Saving Silverman

10 p.m. Valentine

Sunday

4 p.m. Head Over Heels

7 p.m. Valentine

Monday

7 p.m. Saving Silverman

Tuesday

12:30 p.m. Dinosaur

7 p.m. Head Over Heels

Wednesday

12:30 p.m. Digimon: The Movie

7 p.m. Valentine

Thursday

Closed

Head Over Heels (PG-13)

Rated PG-13 for sexual content, crude humor and language. (87 minutes)

Amanda is a nice, regular girl (Monica Potter) who moves to New York to work as an art restorer, and begins sharing an apartment with four roommates who are all fashion models. She keeps bumping into Jim Winston (Freddie Prinze, Jr.), cute boy who lives in the apartment building across the street. Amanda's roommates finally dress her and make her up to crash a party he's throwing. Amanda finally speaks to Jim, and he asks her out. Returning to her apartment on cloud nine later that evening, she spies him apparently committing a murder, and calls the police. The cops assume Amanda and the girls are just airhead models and dismiss the claim.

Saving Silverman (PG-13)

Rated PG-13 for crude and sexual humor, language and thematic material. (92 minutes)

"Saving Silverman" is the story of a group of young guys who will do anything to save their friend (Jason Biggs) from marrying the wrong girl, even if it means kidnapping his ex-girlfriend in order to bring them back together.

Valentine (R)

Rated R for strong horror violence, some sexuality and language. (97 minutes)

A group of four precocious college girls make fun of one of their nerdy classmates — a young man who harbors a serious grudge about it for years afterwards. Finally, having grown into a handsome, self-assured man, he goes back to get his revenge: each year on Valentine's day he takes one of them on a murderous date.

This schedule is submitted by the Sakura Theater and is subject to change. Comments can be directed to MCCS at 253-4003.

Iwakuni's Theaters

Kokusai:

April 6-13
"Proof of life" - 11 a.m.,
1:30 p.m., 4 p.m., 6:30 p.m.,
(Sat. only) 9 p.m.

New Central I:

April 7 - beginning of May
"Hannibal" - time schedule is not
available at the time of print

New Central II:

April 6-20
"Cast Away" -
3:20 p.m., 6 p.m.,
(Sat. only) 8:40 p.m.

New Central III:

April 6-20
"Meet the Parents" - 5 p.m.,
7 p.m., 9 p.m.

Education



Test Schedule

Tuesdays/

- Fridays** - College Level Examination Program
- DANTES Subject Standardized Test

(Registration opens at 7:45 a.m. and 9:45 a.m. each day.)

- April 18** - ACT Examination
April 19 - Scholastic Assessment Tests
April 23 - Electronic Data Processing Test
April 25 - Defense Language Aptitude Battery
- Defense Language Proficiency Test
April 26 - Armed Forces Classification Test

There is no fee for military personnel; civilians pay (money order only): CLEP \$46, DANTES \$27, ACT \$38 and SAT \$39. Call 253-3855 or stop by the Community Services Building, Room 101. They also offer the GED \$36.

Community



Alcoholics Anonymous

Alcoholics Anonymous open meetings are held on Sunday at 7 p.m. and Wednesdays at 11:30 a.m. A closed meeting is held each Monday at 11:30 a.m. All meetings are held in Room 103 at Building 1104. For more information call 31-8428.

Medical Clinic Health Promotions

Tobacco Cessation Courses will be held on April 18, 20, 25, 27, May 23, 25, 30 and June 1. Cholesterol, nutrition and hypertension counseling will also be offered on an individual basis by calling the Branch Medical Clinic at 253-3266.

2000-2001 Yearbook

Matthew C. Perry Elementary School will accept pre-orders for the 2000-2001 Yearbook until April 20. Yearbooks will be in a hardbound format, black and white with approximately 40 pages. Yearbooks are scheduled to arrive at the end of May. For more information call 253-3327.

Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society

Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society will provide the Layette package, that contains newborn clothing, baby book, crocheted sweater set and blanket and a diaper bag, in "Baby's First Seabag." This baby gift is free to all Navy and Marine Corps families. You must schedule an appointment with a Navy Relief caseworker to discuss budgeting for the baby. Call 253-5311. Layettes are given out to six months before due date and up to one month after birth. You may stop by Building 1100, Room 148 for a preview.

Sure Start Program

Sure Start Program at M.C. Perry Elementary School is a no-cost, preschool program modeled after Head Start, for children who will be 4 years of age by Oct. 31, 2001. It is available for E-1s through E-5s. This full-day (6-hour) program offers medical, dental and developmental screenings, nutritious lunches and snacks, devel-

opmentally appropriate practices at its core, and active involvement in the program by families of all enrolled children. Applications for the 2001-2002 school year can be picked up at the front office of the elementary school. Call 253-4383.

Civilian human Resources Office

Local Employment Orientation

The station CHRO provide the monthly briefing for Iwakuni local job seekers on April 12 from 9-10 a.m. at Community Services Building 411, Room 216/217. Advanced sign-up is required by calling 253-6828.

RESUMIX Training

A new application process started at Iwakuni on March 1. The RESUMIX is used by Navy to fill merit promotion, civilian job vacancies for GS-15 and below, and Wage Grade positions. The CHRO will provide valuable information on RESUMIX on April 12 from 10:30-11:30 a.m. at Community Services Building 411, Room 216/217. Advanced sign-up is required by calling 253-6828.

Marine Corps Community Services

Prom Gowns

Prom gowns will be available for sale on Sunday at noon in the Main Exchange. Call 253-5641.

Anger Management

Learn to manage your anger at this lunchtime seminar on Tuesday at 11:45 a.m. Call 253-3737.

Job Fair Prep

Career Resource Management Center will offer classes to prepare for the April 24-26 Job Fair at Camp Foster and Kadena Air Base, Okinawa. Classes include basic resume writing, job interviews, and job fair preparation. The fair is open to active duty personnel, DoD civilians, retirees, and family members. Call 253-6439.

TAMP/TAP

Career Resource Management Center will hold the DoD pre-separation briefing and the DoL job search seminar on April 17-20 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Community Services Building, Room 121. Separating military personnel are required to attend; spouses are welcome. Contact your career planner to register.

Flea Market

Marine Corps Community Services will hold a community flea market on Saturday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the MAC Dome. Call 253-6184.

Club Iwakuni Changes

Changes and corrections to previously advertised Club Iwakuni events are as follows: the Comedy Showcase date has changed to April 14; Rock 'n' Roll Ladies' Night has changed to April 21; and the Eagle's Nest will close at 1 p.m. April 10 for its annual cherry blossom viewing party.

Konnichiwa Japan

Learn about Japanese culture and customs on April 13 from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Call 253-6165 to register.

Egg Hunt

Marine Corps Community Services Special Events will hold an Easter Egg Hunt on April 14 from 2:30 to 5 p.m. on the Monzen Field. Children ages from 2 to 12 may participate. Call 253-6184.

Talent Show

Sign up for the April 28 talent show on weekdays from 1 to 4 p.m. until April 18 at the Sakura Theater. Call 253-6184.

Child Abuse Prevention Month

To bring awareness to child abuse prevention, the Family Advocacy Program will hold a walk-a-thon on April 21 from 2 to 3 p.m., for parents and third- through sixth-grade children. Call 253-3737.

Active Duty Appointments

The Main Exchange Beauty Shop has set aside three nights a week for active duty only: Mondays, Tuesdays, and Fridays from 3:30 to 6:30 p.m. Schedule appointments by calling 253-4708.

Essay Contest

The MCCA Preview will hold an essay contest through May 1 under the theme "My Most Memorable Experience in Japan." First prize includes publication in the magazine and \$100 in MCCA gift certificates. Call 253-6373 or visit www.mccsiwakuni.com.

Chapel Services



Chapel News

(1) Chapel Annex (2) Marine Memorial Center

Roman Catholic

Saturday 5:30 p.m. Mass (2)
Sunday 9 a.m. Mass (2)

Protestant

Saturday 9:30 a.m. Seventh Day Adventist (1)
Sunday 10 a.m. Church of Christ (2)
10:30 a.m. General Protestant (2)
noon Gospel Service (2)
noon United Pentecostal (2)

Latter Day Saints

Sunday 12:30 p.m. Service (1)

Jewish

Friday 6 p.m. Shabat (2)

For information regarding divine services, religious education or any other Command Religious Program/Chapel activity call the station Chapel at 253-5218. For information on Jewish services call Mark Zeid at 082-231-4008 after 6 p.m. or call the station Chapel.

Seder for Passover

Community Seder for Passover will be held on April 13. For more information call Mark Zeid at 082-231-4008 after 6 p.m. or the station chapel. While there is no fee involved, reservations are required to attend.

Sports Briefs

Spring Trophy League

Spring Trophy League will begin on April 17, and a team captains' meeting will be held April 13. Entry forms are to be completed by Wednesday and returned to the Southside Bowling Center. For more information call 253-3494.

Golf Course Hours

Beginning Saturday, Torii Pines Golf Course operation hours changes to Monday-Friday from 8 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., weekends and holidays from 7 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. The driving range will be open from 7 to 11 p.m.

Course Closed

In support of the MWSS-171 golf tournament, Torii Pines Golf Course will be closed today to all patrons except event participants, from 8 a.m. until the conclusion of the tournament. Call 253-3402.

Registration Ends

Youth baseball registration will end today at 4:30 p.m. Youth 5 to 14 years old may participate. Call 253-3239.

Kintai Marathon

The 35th Annual Kintai Marathon will be run aboard the air station on April 14. Status of Forces Agreement personnel must register by close of business today. The entry fee is \$15 and open to everyone age 16 and older. Volunteers are needed from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the day of the event. Volunteers receive a T-shirt and a hot meal. For more information call 253-5654.

Lifeguards

Aquatics will offer lifeguard and junior lifeguard classes beginning Monday. Successful completion leads to American Red Cross certification. Call 253-4966 for prerequisites.

The Scoreboard

Softball

April 2

Hit Squad defeated Logistics, 18-8
Tradition defeated Jenny's Kids, 15-3
Lancers defeated Jenny's Kids, 21-7
CSSD Dragons defeated Lancers, 15-14
Crash Crew defeated Snafu, 16-1
Full Tilt defeated Power Plant, 15-2

Softball League Winners

Division "B" (April 2)

first place - Lancers (212)

second place - Rooftop

third place - Hit Squad

Division "A" (April 2)

first place - Crash Crew

second place -

Criminals (MALS-12)

third place - Full

Tilt (MAG-12)



Rooftop Warriors' Michael Wiener opens up the game in the first inning with a two-run home run. The Rooftop Warriors went on to win the back-and-forth game 18-16 in Friday night intramural softball action at the main field.

photo by Cpl. Kurt Fredrickson

Rooftop holds off Slammers

by Cpl. Kurt Fredrickson
Torii Teller Staff

Rooftop Warriors ended a three-game skid coming back from an 11-3 deficit to take it from the 171 Slammers 18-16 in Friday night softball action at the main field.

In a back-and-forth game, the Warriors jumped out to an early lead in the first inning after shutting out the Slammers in the top half of the inning.

Glenn Cross, Rooftop third

baseman, led off with a single, and Michael Wiener belted a shot to the fence for an inside-the-park home run. Josh Chance followed up with a double and scored on Jayson Rogers' single, giving Rooftop a 3-0 lead.

The Slammers bounced right back in the top of the second, picking up one run, and then adding 10 more in the third. However, the rally only set up a Rooftop comeback and shafted the Slammers chance of winning.

Down 11-3 in the third, Rooftop faced losing their fourth straight

game on the season, but a quick pep talk woke up the bats. The Warriors sent every man to the plate, scoring eight runs to retake the lead.

Again in the fourth, Rooftop batted around, this time picking up seven runs on as many hits. Heading into the fifth and final inning, 171 Slammers now faced an 18-11 deficit.

"We kept our heads in the game and didn't let the runs get us down," said Rooftop Interim Manager Tony Forbes after the game. "We didn't get down on

ourselves even when we were behind eight runs. We focused and came back to win."

In the top half of the fifth, the first five Slammer batters scored, closing the gap to two runs. The rally ended when the next two batters were quickly eliminated though, and Rooftop picked up the win.

"I think we had them," said Slammers Coach Harrold Capps. "We just got a little complacent at the end. All in all, they just outplayed us."

Hiking season descends on Japan

by Cpl. Kurt Fredrickson
Torii Teller Staff

Those stationed in Japan who enjoy hiking, novice or expert, have many lush, mountainous places to choose from during the spring and summer months while stationed here.

Mikuradake, also known as Three Peaks, is one of many places near the air station that has trails for all hiking ability levels. When hiking the trails of Three Peaks, as well as other trails in Japan, there are a few tips hikers can follow to ensure the day is an enjoyable one.

Three Peaks is a 45-minute

drive from the air station and is rightly named for its three spires of rock. The area is a popular camping, rock climbing and hiking area with miles of trails.

Before heading out into the wilderness, there is one thing that needs to be done.

"You always have to let someone know where you are going hiking," said Jennifer Forbes, an avid hiker. "That way if you fall down a ravine, they will at least have an idea where to start looking for you if you don't come back."

The lower trails of Three Peaks are smoother and gradually gain in steepness. The only way to the top of any of the peaks is to take one of those trails which have concrete steps and many roots protruding from the ground.

Taking the terrain into consideration, running shoes would not be the best choice. The one thing that will make any hiking expedition go well is proper footwear.

Flat bottom shoes can lead to falls, twisted ankles, breaks or a fast way to the bottom of a cliff.

A sturdy pair of boots with a heavy lug sole and tread will be more than enough to get you to your destination and back, according to Forbes. "Always bring extra socks to prevent blisters. Damp feet will blister

and socks should be changed as needed," she added.

The trail to the top passes through heavy woods with many varieties of ferns and flowers along the trail. It is lined with many rocks and boulders, and what lives under and around these rocks is best left alone.

The top of the trail splits left and right to the separate peaks. The left trail goes vertical and climbing with the use of a chain and metal steps is required, but the view from the top is worth it.

There are no trees on top, just eroded boulders to stand on as you look down at the minuscule cars in the parking lot.

Getting down will be faster than going up and should take about 45 minutes. The bottom of the mountain has camping sites, bathrooms, barbecue grills and running water.

To get to Three Peaks go out the main gate to four corners and turn right. Follow Route 188 until reaching Route 2. Take Route 2 toward Hiroshima into Otake. Follow Route 2 until reaching Route 186 in Otake. Turn left onto Route 186. Follow this route and the road signs to Mikuradake.



photos by Cpl. Kurt Fredrickson

Mark Wiener climbs a chain to reach the pinnacle of the Three Peaks trail after more than an hour of hiking.

From the eroded windswept top of Three Peaks hikers can see miles across the mountainous Japanese countryside.